3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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sultry nights the head of the house often makes up his bed there. When his grain is ripening on the home farm he climbs on to the *pii* every morning to survey it, and often stands there to keep an eye open for stray animals likely to spoil it. There is always an ancestor shrine or two on the flat roof, as it is the appropriate place for a *yin* shrine in the earliest stage of its evolution; and it is from the flat roof that the alarm call, *yaahi! yaahi!* is broadcast when a death occurs or something untoward happens for which the immediate assistance of neighbours is needed.

But some homesteads must be flat-roofed throughout, though the cost in time and labour is great. For this is a taboo (*kihər*) of the Earth in some places. Almost all the senior tɛndaanas are therefore obliged to have all their rooms flat-roofed; and at Wakii and Tɛnzugu all houses within the acknowledged precincts of the principal Earth shrines (*tɛŋgbana*) of these places must be flat-roofed throughout. This affects the design and construction of the homestead in many details, but not in its basic pattern.

A homestead reveals much to the instructed eye. Its appearance and condition often betray the character, capabilities, social position, and experience of the owner and his wife or wives. The Golibdaana of Tɛnzugu and the Yikpɛmdaana of Gorogo each have a large rectangular room of sun-dried bricks, built for them by boys trained at the White Fathers' Mission at Bolɔga, and used as sanctum, private storeroom, and personal sleeping-quarters. They are both wealthy, ambitious, upstart headmen, whose political and economic privileges are wholly dependent on the white man's rule. Hence, though themselves illiterate and of the generation that reached maturity before British rule became established, they are 'progressives', alert to useful or merely pretentious innovations that add to their prestige or bolster up their self-assurance. The Tɔŋraana, or, to go outside Taleland, the Nangodi na'aba, wealthy men too in virtue of their political role under the British Administration, but deriving their authority from the native social structure, do not require adventitious props to their prestige. Their private rooms are built in native style, with the useful addition of a rough plank door fastened with a padlock. A plank door is a rarity in Taleland, and very hard to come by. If a room in a commoner's homestead is fitted with one, it may be inferred that some member of the family has been abroad a good deal or has close connexions with people who are or have been in Ashanti, in the Colony, or in European service.

Most Tallensi take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads. A dilapidated homestead indicates that its owner is poor or infirm or lazy, and therefore unable to provide the foodstuffs to recompense relatives who might be asked to help him repair it. A good-for-nothing like Yɛlnaar of Tɔŋ-Puhug has a tumbledown dwelling which his neighbours point to with scorn. A man of more self-respect would be

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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even mother and daughter, and hence, perhaps, Tallensi do not have such a definite conventional rationalization of their attitudes towards the mother. They say you respect your mother and cherish her in old age because she bore and fed you. In childhood you were more attached to her than to your father; you ran to her whenever you were tired or hungry or ill and she comforted and fed you; as an adult you realize the importance of 'father's begetting' (*ba-dɔŋam*) in jural, ritual, and economic matters such as marriage or landowning, and in crises like sickness or death; but your mother is still honoured as the centre of your domestic arrangements if you are a man, and if you are a woman, she is the one person you can always come to in sickness or trouble, in the certainty of loving attention. Comfort, emotional security, and food—these are the distinguishing qualities of a mother in Tale thought. It corresponds to the more personal character of the bonds between mother and child, by contrast with the jurally and ritually weighted ties with the father.

Tallensi say that one must respect one's living parents; but to one's dead parents one owes reverence and submission in surpassing degree. That is what the proverb 'Fear the dead and do not fear the living' means to them.[1] One can defy a living parent sometimes and rely on being forgiven; one cannot defy a dead parent. One can live without the help of a living parent, if necessary, but not without the mystical protection of one's dead parents.

In the religious practice of the Tallensi the ancestors exercise their powers without compunction. They punish and slay as arbitrarily as they bless. Every dry season men return to rebuild their parental homes which have been allowed to lie in decay for many years. They come from Mampurugu, from outlying parts of Taleland, or from Ashanti and the Colony. Some have been away for years. Pal of Zubiun had a prosperous farm in Mampurugu, where he had gone to settle on being discharged from the regiment after the war of 1914–18. During his fifteen years in Mampurugu he had become fairly wealthy, with five wives, a horse, several head of cattle, and a quantity of good clothes. Dema of Tenzugu, who joined the regiment as far back as 1912 and had lived in Ashanti as a trader since his discharge after the war, was obviously a man of considerable wealth by Tale standards. Both returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads in 1935–6. They told the same story. Wives and children had died; there had been repeated bouts of sickness in the family; other misfortunes had piled up over the years; and all, as the diviners declared, because they had 'rejected (*zayah*) their fathers (*banam*)' by remaining in foreign parts. It did not matter much while there were older brothers at home to 'give water (*zay kuom ti*)', that is, make sacrifices, to the ancestral shrines. But

[1] The verb *so*, to fear, has a wide range of meaning and here it means to show respect towards, to revere, to stand in awe of.

9: Cardinall G-5 (ca. 1920)1924 FE11 Tallensi FE11

The Division of the Year among the Talansi of the Gold Coast. 47

By A. W. Cardinall.

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Among the Talansi, a hill tribe of mixed origin living in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, close to the 11th parallel North, the following divisions in the year are recognised. They do not actually correspond to months or moons, but are periods of time or seasons recognisable by all. They depend on the fall of the rain, which is far from being regular:—

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
1. Kodo	- December to end January	- The cold season—no particular meaning to the word, which is a proper name.

CDO * Beri. The Kanuri-speaking inhabitants of Bornu are called Beriberi by Hausa and other peoples, indicating a former and very ancient connection with the Berber.

9: Cardinall G-5 (ca. 1920) 1924 FE11 Tallensi FE11

	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
2. Gunfuku	February	Gun', gunga—kapok tree. fuku—blowing of the wind. The period when the kapok pods ripen. This is evidence of the Dagomba extraction of this people, since kapok is, undoubtedly, a southern production. Their own tradition says they came from the south as a result of interfamily wars.
3. Gologu	March	This is the name of a festival which takes place shortly after full moon. In 1921 the ceremonial dancing and symbolic planting of corn, which I witnessed by good luck, took place on March 1st. In 1922 about March 13th.
4. Sionbeo	End of March or early April	Time of early planting. Sion—making holes in which to drop the grains. beo—poor. At this time it is not certain if the dry season will not return for a period and so dry up the first shoots.
5. Sionsongo	April and May	The time of good planting. songo—good. This is the proper planting time.
6. Sionyio	Late May and early June	The time of late planting. yio—conveys an idea of doubt. Planting at this time may or may not have a result.
7. Narechag	Late June and early July	Early millet harvest. Nare—early millet. chag'—cut.
8. Naliri	Late July, mid August	Na'—early millet. biri—small. The time for eating the small ears of early millet, which are not put in the granary owing to their smallness.
9. Komwanrega	August-September	Kom—water. wanreg'—month or moon. The period of heavy rain.

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	Approximate Period.	Explanation.
10. Dawanrega	September—late September, early October.	Da—market. After the harvesting of the dark red or early guinea-corn, the Bari people of the Talansi tribe hold a great festival, during which they sacrifice to the spirit of their market-place. Bari is the largest market in their country. At this time, too, it is usual everywhere to sacrifice to the earth gods and departed ancestors.
11. Tenlebgre	Mid October	Beginning of the dry season. Ten',-tenga—earth. lebgre—has changed.
12. Chibunfu	November	Harvesting season. Chi—guinea corn. bunfu—knife with which the ears are cut off the standing stalks.

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104 The orthography is that of an educated native of these parts.

A. W. CARDINALL.

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